

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MASERU

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INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 1586

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, LT

SUBJECT: PRIVATE VISIT TO U.S. BY KING MOSHOESHOE II

REF: A. GABORONE 2113, B. STATE 177730,

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER INFORMED CHARGE EVENING JULY 17 THAT KING MOSHOESHOE'S TRIP HAS AGAIN BEEN POSTPONED. POSTPONEMENT IS RESULT OF CABINET MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE PROPOSED PRIVATE VISIT, SPECIFICALLY THE LACK OF ANY OFFICIAL PROTOCOLAIRE CHARACTER. VISIT WILL BE PROPOSED AGAIN FOR A DISTANT DATE TO PERMIT GOL TO REQUEST APPROPRIATE OFFICIAL RECEPTION FOR HIS MAJESTY. IN ADDITION TO PERSONAL/PRIVATE PROGRAM. END SUMMARY.

2. SECOND POSTPONEMENT OF VISIT HAS BROUGHT TO SURFACE SOME BYZANTINE ASPECTS OF INTRA-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS IN MASERU. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS REPORTEDLY MULTIFOLD MISGIVINGS IN CABINET CONCERNING THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE HEAD OF STATE MAKING A PURELY PRIVATE VISIT (FONMIN EXPRESSED THIS VIEW BY SAYING QTE KINGS CAN'T JUST LOOK AT COWS UNQTE), NO ONE DEIGNED TO INFORM HIS MAJESTY. NOT EVEN PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN WOULD COMMUNICATE WITH THE KING (WHO WAS THEN AWAY AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY WHERE HE IS STUDYING FOR A LAW DEGREE). INSTEAD, THE FOREIGN MINISTER, WITH OR WITHOUT THE INSTRUCTIONS OF HIS PRIME MINISTER, CABLED AMBASSADOR
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MAKEKA TO RAISE OBJECTIONS IN WASHINGTON. THEREAFTER, THE MATTER QUICKLY SURFACED HERE WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER TAKING UP THE SUBJECT WITH THE AMBASSADOR (REF A). FONMIN'S APPARENT ACCEPTANCE OF THE IDEA OF PROCEEDING WITH THE PRIVATE VISIT WAS CLEARLY NOT RPT NOT CONVEYED TO THE REST OF THE CABINET PRIOR TO FONMIN'S DEPARTURE FOR KHARTOUM OAU MEETING. ACTING FONMIN SEKHONYANA, THEREFORE, PROCEEDED TO IMPLEMENT THE EARLIER CABINET-AGREED

POSITION TO OPPOSE A PRIVATE VISIT.

2. ON JULY 11 THE KING RETURNED HOME FROM OXFORD. ON THE 13TH THE CHARGE RECEIVED A MESSAGE THROUGH THE DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS (ROC AMBASSADOR LIU) THAT HE SHOULD DISCUSS THE PROBLEM OF THE VISIT WITH MIN OF HEALTH PATRICK MOTA, A FRIEND OF THE KING'S AND A FRIEND OF THE UNITED STATES. MINISTER MOTA HAD DIFFICULTY FINDING THE WORDS TO DESCRIBE THE PROBLEM BUT, WITH CHARGE'S ASSISTANCE, QUICKLY AGREED ON "INAPPROPRIATE FOR A HEAD OF STATE" AS THE FEELING IN CABINET CONCERNING THE KING'S PROPOSED PRIVATE VISIT. MIN. MOTA SUGGESTED CHARGE REQUEST APPOINTMENT TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE WITH PRIMIN, MAKING CERTAIN TO GO THROUGH ACTING GONMIN SEKHONYANA. ON FRIDAY, JULY 14 CHARGE SAW SEKHONYANA WHO WAS WELL BRIEFED AND, AFTER REPEATING THE CABINET'S MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE TRIP, SAID HE WOULD TAKE UP THE MATTER WITH THE PRIMIN AND TRY TO GET HIM TO TALK TO THE KING.

3. CHARGE WAS INFORMED ORALLY BY A/FONMIN ON JULY 17 THAT THE VISIT HAS BEEN POSTPONED. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED WRITTEN CONFIRMATION OF THIS. THE GOL APPARENTLY INTENDS NOW TO PROPOSE THE VISIT AGAIN AS A PRIVATE ONE WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIAL ASPECTS AT A DISTANT DATE, NOT BEFORE NEXT YEAR. THE EMBASSY WILL REFRAIN FROM DISCUSSING EXACT DATES WITH GOL BUT WILL ADVISE THAT THE VISIT COULD NOT BE SCHEDULED AGAIN BEFORE NEXT SPRING OR NEXT SUMMER. EXACTLY WHAT SORT OF OFFICIAL RECEPTION WILL BE REQUESTED IS UNCLEAR. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT GOL WILL SHOOT FOR A BRIEF CONFIDENTIAL

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MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT (SAY 15 MINUTES). WHETHER GOL WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH RECEPTION BY VICE PRESIDENT OR SIMPLY AN INTRODUCTION AND BRIEF CHAT WITH THE PRESIDENT AS PART OF A VISIT TO THE WHITE HOUSE REMAINS TO BE SEEN. EMBASSY BELIEVES GOL IS UNLIKELY TO SETTLE FOR RECEPTION BY SECRETARY VANCE OR OTHER U.S. CABINET OFFICIAL. ONE POSSIBLE PROPOSAL, IF GOL REQUESTS VISIT WITH OFFICIAL CHARACTER, WOULD BE TO INCLUDE STATE GOVERNORS IN PROTOCOL DURING TOUR. THIS, TOGETHER WITH A LESS-THAN-TOP-LEVEL RECEPTION IN WASHINGTON MIGHT SATISFY THE GOL.

4. FOREGOING IS PURE SPECULATION AND NO ASSURANCE CAN BE GIVEN THAT ANY OFFICIAL RECEPTION ACCEPTABLE TO GOL CAN BE ARRANGED NO MATTER HOW LONG THE TRIP IS POSTPONED. EMBASSY HAS MADE THIS CLEAR TO MINISTERS MOTA AND SEKHONYANA (ABOVE) AND WILL REITERATE THIS TO THEM AND TO HIS MAJESTY WHEN THE OCCASION PRESENTS ITSELF.

5. EMBASSY HAS HEARD NO MORE WITH RESPECT TO POSSIBLE JONATHAN ATTENDANCE AT UNGA (REF B). WE WILL IN ANY CASE PASS MESSAGE (REF B) TO A/FONMIN THAT A MEETING - EVEN A BRIEF ONE -- WITH THE PRESIDENT DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE POSSIBLE.
STOKES

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